

A Guide to Human Conduct

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New light is shed here on the ten universal principles of morality known as Yama and Niyama. These are the foundational principles of Ananda Marga's eight-fold system of yogic spiritual practices—yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. These ten principles have universal applicability when interpreted in the light of deep spiritual understanding. Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar (1921-1990), was a spiritual preceptor and guru in the tradition of Shiva and Krishna. He founded the international socio-spiritual organization Ananda Marga ("Path of Bliss") -- Richard Gauthier, Saint Louis USA, March 8, 2025.

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INTRODUCTION

Morality is the foundation of Sádhaná (spiritual practice). It must, however, be remembered that morality or good conduct is not the culminating point of the spiritual march. As a moralist one may set an ideal for other moralists, but to do this is not something worth mentioning for a Sádhaka (spiritual aspirant). Sádhaná, in its very start, requires mental equilibrium. This sort of mental harmony may also be termed as morality.

People often say, "I follow neither a religion nor rituals; I abide by truth; I harm nobody and I tell no lies. This is all that is necessary; nothing more need be done or learnt." It should be clearly understood that morality is only an effort to lead a well-knit life. It will be more correct to define morality as a dynamic force rather than a static one, because balance in the extroversial spheres of life is maintained by waging a pauseless war against all opposite ideas. It is not an intro-external equilibrium. If the unbalanced state of mind takes a serious turn by pressure of external allurements, and if the mental disturbance is found to be intense, it is likely that the power for internal struggle may yield and consequently the external equilibrium, the show of morality, may at any moment break down.

That is why morality is, no doubt, not the goal, not even a static force. The morality of a moralist may disappear at any moment. It cannot be said with any certainty that the moralist who has resisted the temptation of a bribe of two rupees would also be able to resist the temptation of an offer of two hundred thousand rupees. Nevertheless, morality is not absolutely valueless in human life. Morality is an attribute of a good citizen and it is the starting point on the path of Sádhaná.

Moral ideals must be able to furnish human beings with the ability as well as the inspiration to proceed on the path of Sádhaná. Morality depends on one's efforts to maintain a balance regarding time, place and person and therefore there may be differences in moral code. But the ultimate end of moralism is the attainment of Supreme bliss and therefore there should not be any possibility of

any imperfections of relativity. It cannot be said that the ultimate aim of human life is not to commit theft; what is desirable is that the tendency to commit theft should be eliminated. Not to indulge in falsehood is not the aim of life; what is important is that the tendency of telling lies should be dispelled from one's mind. The Sádhaná starts spiritual practices with the principles of morality, of not indulging in theft or falsehood. The aim of such morality is attainment of such a state of Oneness with Brahma where no desire is left for theft; and all tendencies of falsehood disappear.

In the Sádhaná of Ananda Marga, moral education is imparted with this ideal of oneness with Brahma, because Sádhaná is not possible without such a moral ideation. Sádhaná devoid of morality will divert people again towards material enjoyments and at any moment they may use their mental power, acquired with much hardship, to quench their thirst for meagre physical objects. There are many who have fallen from the path of Yoga or Tantra Sádhaná and are spending their days in disrepute and infamy. Whatever little progress they achieved through forcible control of their instincts, was lost in a moment's error in pursuit of mundane pleasures.

It must, therefore, be emphasized that even before beginning Sádhaná, one must follow moral principles strictly. Those who do not follow these principles should not follow the path of Sádhaná; otherwise they will bring about their own harm and that of others. Ácáryas must have noticed that people of over-selfish nature fear Ananda Marga itself for fear of following its strict moral principles. They are concerned that the spread of Ananda Marga may inconvenience the fulfilment of their mean, selfish desires and therefore, they malign the Marga in an effort to conceal their own weakness and dishonesty. But remember that those who are lacking in moral spirit do not deserve to be called human beings. However hard they may try, their tall talk alone cannot camouflage the meanness of their minds for a long time.

YAMA SÁDHANÁ

The first lesson of human conduct is Yama Sádhaná. We shall discuss all the aspects of Yama Sádhaná. You know that Yama consists of five principles – Ahimsá, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha.

Ahimsásatyásteyam Brahmacharyáparigraháh yamah

The practice of these five principles achieves control by different processes. The word Saṁnyama in Saṁskṛta means "regulated conduct". It should be clearly understood that Saṁnyama does not imply destroying something or somebody.

AHIMŚÁ

Manovákkáyaeh sarvabhúta námapiidá namahimsá.

Ahimsá means not inflicting pain or hurt on anybody by thought, word or action. This word is wrongly interpreted by many. Some so-called learned persons in fact, define the word ahimsá in such a manner that if one adheres to it strictly, it is impossible to live not only in a society but also in forests, hills and caves. In such an interpretation of the term ahimsá, not only is killing

prohibited, but even to fight a defensive fight is not allowed. By tilling the land, one may cause the death of innumerable insects and creatures under the earth's surface. Therefore, the use of a plough is not permissible. The followers of such an interpretation of ahimsá say that those who want to lead a religious life should not use the plough themselves, but employ other low-born people to do the same to save themselves from the sin of destroying life. Sugar must be poured into the abodes of the ants; no matter whether human beings have food or not. The poor must spare their blood from their bodies to save insects, the born enemies of human beings.

This is no definition of ahimsá. It merely causes confusion. It is contrary to true dharma; it is against the very laws of existence. Even the process of respiration involves the death of numberless microbes. They are all living beings and to save them one will have to stop breathing. The administration of medicines to the suffering will have to be stopped, because such medicines cause the destruction of disease-causing bacteria. If ahimsá is so interpreted, where will such interpreters be able to stand? They will have to give up even filtered water, because the process of filtration of water means destroying the insects that cause impurity. It is also not possible to drink impure water, because then it is likely that such microbes might die in the stomach.

In the post-Vedic age this type of ahimsá was practiced in India for a long period, and as a result life for ordinary citizens became very miserable. The populace viewed with fear the religion dominated by this so-called ahimsá. They were forced to accept an atheistic belief, and they left the path of dharma. Devoid of any code of conduct, and intent on giving first preference to their own selfishness, such atheists became a burden to the society and to the world. Those who wanted to enforce the so-called ahimsá-influenced religion, became impractical and impotent by nature. Thus, there is a pressing need in the modern age to re-think these historical facts from a new angle of vision.

This age was followed by another wherein another new definition of the word ahimsá was propagated. According to this definition, himsá meant to cause pain to living beings, but did not include the slaughter of animals for food. This idea is very much mistaken. If causing pain amounts to himsá, the slaughter of animals for food must also be called himsá, because the animals do not offer their heads willingly at the altar of death for this cause.

Recently one more interpretation for this word has been heard. It somewhat resembles the second definition described earlier, but it even lacks the simplicity or sincerity of that interpretation. According to this interpretation, ahimsá means non-violence or non-application of force. Possibly it is this interpretation which has distorted most the meaning of ahimsá. In all actions of life, whether small or big, the unit mind progresses by surmounting the opposing forces. Life evolves through the medium of force. If this force is not properly developed, life becomes absolutely dull. No wise person would advocate such a thing, because this would be contrary to the very fundamentals of human nature.

The champions of non-violence (so-called ahimsá) have, therefore, to adopt hypocrisy and falsehood whenever they seek to use this so-called ahimsá for their purposes. If the people of one country conquer another country by brute force, the people of the defeated nation must use force to regain their freedom. Such a use of force may be crude or subtle and as a result, both the body and mind of the conquerors may be hurt. When there is any application of force, it cannot be called

non-violence. Is it not violence if you hurt a person not by your hands but by some other indirect means? Is the boycott movement against a particular nation not violence? Therefore, I say that those who interpret non-violence and ahimsá to be synonymous have to repeatedly resort to hypocrisy to justify their actions. The army or police are necessary for administration of a country. If these organizations do not use force even in case of necessity, their existence will be of no meaning. The mark of so-called ahimsá or non-violence on a bullet does not make the bullet non-violent.

Those who are not adequately equipped to oppose an evil-doer should make every endeavor to gain power and then make the proper use of this power. In the absence of ability to resist evil, and in the absence of even an effort to acquire such ability, declaring oneself to be non-violent in order to hide one's weaknesses before the opponent may serve a political end, but it will not protect the sanctity of righteousness.

The meaning of the word ahimsá in the sphere of Sádhaná has already been explained. According to its correct meaning, one will have to guide one's conduct carefully to ensure that one's thought or actions cause pain to nobody and are unjust to none. Any thought or action with the intention of causing harm to someone else amounts to himsá. The existence of life implies destruction of certain lower forms, no matter whether there is intention of doing harm or not. The process of respiration kills thousands of millions of protoplasmic cells. Whether one knows it or not, in every action such living cells are dying and being destroyed. The use of prophylactics means destructions of millions of disease-carrying germs. The crop-eating insects, parasites, mosquitoes, bugs, spiders, etc. are also being killed in innumerable ways. This is necessary to maintain one's livelihood; it is not with the intention of causing pain to them. Such acts also, therefore, cannot be classed as himsá; they are to be done for self-defense.

As a result of clash and cohesion within the physical structure of every entity and also for the maintenance of structural solidarity at every moment, a process of formation and deformation is always taking place. Rice is obtained from paddy – is there no life in paddy? Paddy can sprout. It is also capable of reproduction. For the preservation of the physical body you prepare rice by killing the paddy. Do you have any intention to harm anybody while preparing rice? It is thus seen that life depends on other forms of life for its very existence. There is no question of himsá or ahimsá here. If this is conceived as himsá living beings will have to subsist on bricks, sand and stone. Even breathing will have to be stopped or one will have to commit suicide.

It is, however, very necessary to remember two things in respect of edibles. First, as far as possible, articles of food must be selected from among those items in which development of consciousness is comparatively little; i.e., if vegetables are available, animals should not be slaughtered. Secondly, under all circumstances before killing any animal having developed or under-developed consciousness, it must be considered whether it is possible to live in a healthy body without taking such lives.

The human body is constituted of innumerable living cells. These cells develop and grow with the help of similar living entities. The nature of your living cells will be formed in accordance with the type of food you take. Ultimately all these together will affect your mind to some extent. If the cells of the human body grow on rotten and bad-smelling food, or on the fresh flesh of animals in

which mean tendencies predominate, it is but natural that the mind will have a tendency of meanness. The policy of eating, without due consideration, whatever is available cannot be supported in any case, even though there may not be any question of hiṁsá or ahiṁsá. It should not be your policy to do what you wish. You must perform actions after due thought. For continued subsistence a policy will have to be adopted for taking food; otherwise it will be against the code of aparigraha. What aparigraha means will be explained later.

Hiṁsá and the use of force are not identical. Sometimes the use of force may result in hiṁsá, even though there is no thought in the mind to cause pain. When the pressure of circumstances compels the use of force against certain individuals resulting in hiṁsá, such individuals are termed as átatáyii in Saṁskṛta.

Kṣetradárápahárii ca shastradhárii dhanápaháh
Agnidagaradashcaeva śadete hyátatáyinah

“Anyone who, by the use of brute force, wants to take possession of your property, abducts your wife, comes with a weapon to murder you, wants to snatch away your wealth, sets fire to your house or wants to take life by administering poison, is called an átatáyii.” If any person or a nation wants to occupy all or part of another country, the use of physical force against such invading forces is not against the principle of ahiṁsá. Rather, by a wrong interpretation of the term ahiṁsá or by interpreting hiṁsá and brute force as identical, common people will have to suffer from loss of wealth, happiness, or other hardships.

Sometimes it so happens that people instead of convincing superstitious people, injure their sentiments by their behaviour. A perusal of history shows that the antagonists of idolatry have, on many occasions, destroyed beautiful temples which were unique examples of architecture. They destroyed the beautiful images which represented the expressions of sculptural art. All these acts are extremely violent, because they cause severe pain to the idolaters, and consequently the idol-worshippers adopt an obstinate attitude towards idols even though they are fully convinced that idol-worship is futile. As a result, not only is the spiritual progress of the idol-worshippers hampered, but the progress of the whole human society is retarded. It is worth noting that even if in any country all the people without exception give up idolatry, the spiritual aspirants, who follow the principles of Brahmacharya, will preserve images carefully in museums out of appreciation for sculpture and aesthetic taste. They will not destroy these beautiful works in any circumstances. Destroying a work of art also results in the destruction of the sense of subtle appreciation, and this is in no way proper.

While the mind is still attached to religious or sectarian signs or submits to superstitious rituals, it remains engrossed in crude objects. Any crude method to prevent such sectarian superstitions will cause reactions in the mind and this will hamper Sádhaná. The best course, therefore, is to help these persons to expand their minds by means of Brahma bhávaná – cosmic ideation – and only in that case will they be able to give up superstitions easily.

The principle of ahiṁsá, one of the aspects of Brahma Sádhaná, must have been clearly understood now. Let us now consider whether parents punishing a child amounts to hiṁsá or ahiṁsá. No, it is not hiṁsá because there is no intention of causing harm or pain at all. The purpose of such

punishment is not to make the child shed tears, the purpose of such action is only correction. Whether it is a thief or a robber or a gentleman or a friend or anybody else, any action with a true spirit of rectification cannot be termed as hiṁsá, no matter how harsh it may seem.

It must now be clear that in day-to-day life it is not at all difficult to follow the path of true ahimsá. Taking meat as food is harmful in hot countries, especially where vegetables are available in abundance. However, under medical advice, as a diet after recovery from illness or as one of the constituents of medicine, eating meat cannot be called either hiṁsá or greed, because the meat is eaten under those circumstances only to maintain life. In extremely cold countries people eat animal flesh, wear animal skins and burn animal fat under the pressure of necessity.

Heroism is revealed in fight against aggressors. Consider the Rámáyāṇa, the great epic. It describes Shrii Ráma waging a war with all his might against Rávaṇa, who abducted his wife. Shrii Ráma's action was in no way against the principle of ahimsá, because he did not invade Lanká with any desire to conquer the territory or to cause harm.

Consider the Mahábhárata. Mahápuruṣa Shrii Kṛṣṇa had insisted to the Pandavas to take up arms against the Kaoravas, because the Kaoravas were aggressors (átatáyii) who had taken possession of the land by force. No one would accuse the very incarnation of love, Shrii Maháprabhu, one of the great revolutionists in the social and spiritual world, of adopting ways associated with hiṁsá; but he too pounced like a lion on the tyrant Kázii (Judge). If hiṁsá and use of force were synonymous, Maháprabhu, the incarnation of mercy, certainly would not have done so.

The use of force against an aggressor is valour and desisting from such use of force is cowardice. But the weak people must assess their strength before indulging in violent conflict with a powerful aggressor; otherwise, if a fight is started without acquiring proper strength injustice may temporarily triumph. In history such an error has been called "Rajput folly". The Rajputs always went forward with courage to resist Mughal invasion. No doubt, they fought valiantly, but they faced the enemy without assessing their own strength. They suffered from intrigues and internal dissensions and hence they always lost battles and died a heroic death. It is, therefore necessary to acquire adequate strength before declaring a war against an aggressor. To pardon aggressors before correcting their nature means encouraging injustice. Of course, if you find that the aggressor is bent on destroying you, whether you use force or not, it would be proper to die at least giving a blow to the best of your might without waiting to assemble the adequate forces.

SATYA

Parahitártham váunmanoso yathárthatvam satyam.

Satya implies proper action of mind and the right use of words with the spirit of welfare. It has no English synonym. The word "true" or "truth" would be translated in Saṁskṛta as "rta" (to state the fact). The Sádharma is not asked to follow the path of rta. One is to practice Satya. The practical side of Satya is dependent on relativity, but its finality lies in Parama Brahma, the Supreme Spiritual Entity. That is why Brahma is often referred to as the "essence of Satya."

Satyam jñānamantaṁ Brahma.

Even though the objective of a Sádha is to achieve that ultimate entity, in the process Sádhas have to deal with the relativity of their surroundings. Humans are rational beings: they possess in varying degrees the capability to do what is necessary or good for humanity. In the realm of spirituality such thought, word or action has been defined as Satya.

For example, a person rushes to you for shelter. You do not know whether he is guilty or not, or perhaps you know for certain that he is not guilty. He is followed by a ruffian bent on torturing him. If this terrified man seeks refuge in your house, and then the ruffian comes and asks you regarding his whereabouts, what should you do? By adhering to rta or truth you would inform the ruffian of his whereabouts. Then if he is murdered, will you not be responsible for this murder? Your mistake may have resulted in the murder of an innocent person. By adhering to rta or truth you become indirectly guilty of this heinous crime. What would be your duty if you followed the correct interpretation of Satya? It would be not to reveal the whereabouts of the person and rather to misguide the aggressor so that the refugee may safely return home.

Suppose your mother is taking food. A letter is received about the death of your maternal grandfather. If mother enquires about the contents of the letter, what reply will you give? If you adhere to “truth”, you will reveal the news of her father’s death, which will cause a great shock to her mind and she would not even be able to take her food. It would be preferable in this case to state that all is well in their family. After your mother has had her food, a mention of her father’s illness would prepare the ground for her to bear the news of the tragedy. In this way, even though something other than truth was uttered, the dignity of Satya has been maintained.

ASTEYA

Paradravyápaharaño tyágo’steyam.

Not to take possession what belongs to others is asteya. It means non-stealing. Stealing may be of four types:

1. Physical theft of any material object. Ordinarily those persons who steal material objects are called thieves. But thieves are not only those persons who flee with stolen objects after committing armed robbery. Whatever is taken in possession by the use of brute physical force, of arms or of strength of intellect, whether it is money or goods, amounts to theft, because behind such actions there is the intention of taking others’ property deceitfully. However, acceptance of anything like money, crops, gold, etc., in exchange for money in a proper way is not theft.
2. Psychic theft. Here you did not take material possession of anything, but you planned it in your mind. This also called theft, because you have mentally stolen. Only the fear of law or of adverse criticism prevented you from doing the action physically.
3. Depriving others of their due physically. Even if you do not take possession of what belongs to others, but you deprive others of what is their due, you become responsible for their loss. This is also stealing.

4. Depriving others of their due mentally. If you do not actually deprive anybody of what is justifiably their due, but you plan in your mind to do so, that too amounts to theft.

Some explanation here is necessary regarding the third and fourth types of theft referred to above. You may have seen that many educated people travel by train without purchasing proper tickets. They do not directly steal money from the Railway administration, but they deprive the railway administration of its due. A little thought will reveal that there is a sort of barter relationship of the passengers and the railway administration and therefore ticketless travel amounts to theft of the type referred to under 3 and 4 above. Those who travel by train have obtained the facility from the railway administration. By purchasing tickets, they pay for that facility in full and consequently the railway administration cannot be held in high esteem for rendering a social service. When the railway is not rendering free services, not to pay one's travelling fare is theft.

Consider for a moment: what type of person commits such a theft for a few rupees only! Often people of the type indulge in all types of tall talks, freely criticize the leaders, and accuse them of corruption and nepotism. If their shortcoming is pointed out, they plead "It is difficult to live in the world with such strict morality. Those who run the railway administration in such a manner deserve it – this type of theft is justified." Missionaries or ascetics who convey a divine message, or political leaders with the noble purpose of doing good to the country, are seen to be often indulging in ticketless travel. This is a daily occurrence. Bribing government employees to evade income and other taxes, or demanding travelling allowance for a higher class when they actually travel in a lower class, these are all nothing but cheating. It is not only theft, it is also pettiness.

All these tendencies to steal are contradictory to the code of *asteya*. In many cases even educated people often act knowingly against the principle of *asteya* or do not want to accept that petty stealing violates it. The author was once questioned by an acquaintance who was a Railway employee as to why he had purchased a full ticket for a nephew aged thirteen years, when a half ticket might have done (half tickets being permitted up to the age of twelve only).

There are some moralists who do not want to cheat any particular individual, but do not consider anything wrong in cheating the well-to-do or the government. Many a shopkeeper would sell adulterated commodities to his customers but entertain his own friends and guests with genuine items. It should be remembered that all actions with such a psychological background are against *asteya*. The easiest way of practicing *asteya*, as in the case of all other principles of *Yama* and *Niyama*, is auto-suggestion. If people, right from the childhood, remember these codes and remind themselves what is correct, they will not go astray when they grow up – even in the midst of temptations – and they will be able to maintain the high standard of thoughts and character.

BRAHMACARYA

The correct meaning of *Brahmacarya* is "to remain attached to *Brahma*". "*Brahmaṇi vicaraṇam iti Brahmacharyam*". Whenever people do some work or think of doing any work extroversially, they look upon the object, with which they come in contact, as a crude finite entity. Because of their constant aspiration for material achievement their mind is so engrossed in material objects that their very consciousness becomes crude. The meaning of practising *Brahmacarya Sādhanā* is to treat the object with which one comes in contact as different expressions of *Brahma* and not as

crude forms. By means of such an ideation, even though the mind wanders from one object to another, it does not get detached from Brahma because of the Cosmic feeling taken for each and every object. As a result of this Preya Sádhaná (extroversial approach) is converted into Shreya Sádhaná (introversial approach) and Káma into Prema. ([Preya means attraction towards crude material objects, while] Shreya means attraction towards the ultimate reality. Káma means desire for finite objects and Prema means desire for the Infinite).

Many misinterpret Brahmacharya to mean preservation of semen. It should be remembered that neither the word Brahma nor the word charya has any relevance to the word “semen”. Moreover, even physiologically such a preservation of semen is a bluff. Either owing to the disease in certain glands or by the use of similar other processes, unless one becomes maimed, it is not possible to observe such Brahmacharya. It is certainly true that if the correct meaning of the word Brahmacharya is accepted (that is, to feel the Cosmic Entity in every material object), control in life becomes essential, but such control does not imply disobeying the laws of nature. Control means to abide by nature’s laws.

The prevention of the discharge of semen by some special measures or prevention of its surplus formation by fasting is ordinarily termed as so-called Brahmacharya. For those who are not married, this so-called Brahmacharya (which is really not Brahmacharya) has some meaning, because it reduces the possibility of sexual excitement and thus prevents a discharge which may occur due to excitement while awake, asleep or dreaming. This is because when there is no formation of surplus semen, there is no physical desire to waste it. Further consideration will, however, show what this so-called Brahmacharya is worth. Are the prevention of formation of surplus semen and the loss of surplus semen not one and the same thing? All that can be said is that the first alternative is good for the unmarried and the second for the married.

People who by different suppressive methods seek to prevent the discharge of semen, create a bad reaction on their body and mind. Their bodies become rough and lack in luster. A suppression of the sexual desire results in other desires, especially anger, taking a more terrible form. In the olden times only the actual meaning of Brahmacharya was accepted. Later, when society was dominated by the intelligentsia, the so-called monks, who had taken to complete exploitation, thought that if ordinary citizens were allowed to pursue spiritual practices, they might lose the machinery of exploitation at any moment, of which they were so fond. If common people are inspired by spiritual ideals their rationality will grow and grow. The monks realized therefore that the people will have to be kept maimed and helpless. Fear and inferiority complex will have to be infused in people to exploit them. They found that such an exploited mass consisted of ordinary worldly people, most of whom were married. If, therefore, the loss of semen was anyhow declared as anti-religious, they would be able to gain their end without difficulty.

And the result was promptly achieved. Ordinary worldly people began to think that they, by leading a married life, had committed a serious wrong, a heinous sin: they had indulged in activities against Brahmacharya. The monks observed celibacy and were, therefore, far superior. The so-called recluses took advantage of the situation and have, without difficulty, been exploiting the society.

Whether these recluses in fact are naeśthika Brahmacáriis (those who do not waste semen at all) cannot be decided by arguments. This can be decided by medical test. But it can be said without doubts that many of the so-called monks will not pass this test.

Marriage is a natural function like bath, food, sleep, etc. Therefore, there is nothing to be condemned in it, nor does it go against dharma. When a great man or an elevated sádha is not prohibited from taking food, etc., there is no reason why he or she should be debarred from marriage. But proper control is no doubt greatly needed, not only over food and sleep, but in every walk of life. The lack of such control causes disease. Food is essential for life, but absence of control over eating causes indigestion. A bath is refreshing, but in absence of control over bath, i.e., a long-continued bath, would make one catch cold. Similarly, marriage has its function but the absence of restraint in married life would cause various diseases in body and mind.

Marriage is slightly different from other natural functions in life, such as eating, sleeping, etc. Marriage is not so essential for life as are food and sleep.

The need for marriage differs with individuals. That is why in the opinion of Ananda Marga every individual has complete freedom in matters of marriage. For example, marriage of those persons who suffer from some physical or mental disease, or who are not financially well off, or whose present circumstances are not favorable for marriage (i.e., where marriage can cause unhappiness), is not desirable. Those who are constantly engaged in the fulfilment of an ideal, or those who have to spend the greater part of their day in earning their livelihood or some mental occupations, should not marry, because they will not find it possible to fulfil their family commitments properly. The marriages of such people are harmful to the society in many cases. Although marriage is not desirable for those who are suffering from some disease or whose circumstances are not favorable to getting married, there remains a possibility of their indulging in vices stealthily if they are not married. To avoid this, they should work for the attainment of some high ideals or do rigorous spiritual practices. The psychological degeneration which is inherent in the suppression of psychic tendencies can be avoided only by an effort to fulfil a lofty ideal.

It has been said earlier, and it is being repeated, that one has to exercise control in every sphere of life, whether big or small. Such control does not imply killing the desire but controlling it. Desires and tendencies are natural attributes of a living being. Therefore, those who want to kill the desires should better adopt some easy method of committing suicide instead of pursuing any difficult method of spiritual practices. I do not find any reason to support the so-called Brahmacharya for those who are Shaiva, Shákta, Vaeśháva, or who believe in Puráṇas, because their deities, Shiva, Viśṇu, Kṛṣṇa and others, were what is commonly known as worldly people. In Puráṇa the names of their wives and children are also mentioned.

Dharma is based on Satya, “Dharma sah na yatra na satyamasti.” “Where there is no satya there is no dharma.” This peculiar interpretation of Brahmacharya may contain anything and everything save except satya. Hence there is no dharma or Brahma in it.

Humanity has to progress towards the ultimate reality by accepting what is truth. That is the path of a sádha; that is the path of dharma. It may be a privilege to parasitic religious professionals

to deny what is simple truth in practical life, but thereby the sanctity of dharma cannot be maintained. It is not the path of satya, it is nothing but hypocrisy.

APARIGRAHA

In case of enjoyment of any material object, the control over the subjectivity is called Brahmacharya while the control over objectivity is aparigraha.

“Deharakśā tiriktabhogasāadhanāsviikaro’parigraha.” Non-indulgence in the enjoyment of such amenities and comforts of life as are superfluous for the preservation of life is aparigraha. For our existence we require food, clothes, and also a house to live in. Provision for old age and money and cultivable land for one’s dependents are also essential. Therefore, a number of factors have to be taken into consideration to determine an individual’s necessity for the preservation of life. It may be that the requirements of any two persons are not similar. It is therefore, difficult to determine the minimum requirements for any particular person, because it is entirely a relative factor. The minimum requirement of a person can, to some extent, be determined and decided by the society.

For example, no one shall accumulate more than a certain amount of money or no one shall possess more than a certain number of houses or no one shall be owner of more than a certain area of landed property. But it is not possible for the society to fix the minimum limit in all spheres. Even after setting a limit for land, property etc., it is not possible to fix a quota in respect of edibles. The voracious may overeat and be attacked with diseases, the seekers of luxury may overspend on their luxuries and incur debt. That is why it will be easier for an individual to be established in aparigraha, if the individual and the society work together cooperatively. Those items of personal requirement which are left to the discretion of the individual largely depend on the conception of that individual’s happiness and comforts.

This also changes according to time, person and place. For example, one person may easily bear certain physical hardships, while another person under the same circumstances may possibly die. Under these circumstances the latter requires greater comforts of life than the former to remove his or her difficulty and this will not be against aparigraha. The place is to be considered also. In the summer season in India woolen clothing is unnecessary, but it is a necessity in Siberia during that time. Time should be considered also. The minimum necessity of an ordinary person today is not limited to the minimum necessity of an ordinary person in prehistoric age. The reason is that the objects of pleasure are more easily available today and will be available even more easily in the future. Therefore, while practicing aparigraha, if the time factor is neglected, one will become unfit for social life and will have to withdraw from the physical world. Advocating the use of [raw sugar], i.e., guṛ, in the age of sugar, and bullock-cart in the age of railways, has no meaning in the practice of aparigraha. Today for an ordinary person whose time is not more valuable than that of another, travelling by aeroplane is definitely contrary to aparigraha, whereas travelling by rail is certainly not against aparigraha.

That is why I said that the society may help individuals to be established in aparigraha by setting a standard in certain spheres of life. But the complete establishment in aparigraha ultimately depends on the individual.

Aparigraha is an endless fight to reduce one's own objects of comforts out of sympathy for the common people, after ensuring that individuals are able to maintain solidarity in their physical, mental and spiritual lives for themselves and their families.

In practising aparigraha the objects of pleasure will increase or decrease with person, place and time; but the definition of aparigraha, as mentioned above, will be applicable to all persons, in all countries and at all times.

HOW TO LIVE IN THE SOCIETY

The establishment of an ideal society depends on the mutual help of the members and their cooperative behavior. This cooperative behavior depends on the practice of the principles of Yama and Niyama; so, spiritual practices, especially the practice of Yama and Niyama, are the sound foundation of an ideal society.

It is often noticed that individuals incur debt because of their violating the principles of Yama and Niyama, especially due to their extravagance – and as a result, they approach the society for relief. In this connection I must point out that just as the society is duty-bound to give relief to individuals by combined efforts, so also it must have control over the conduct of individuals, over their practice of the principles of Yama and Niyama, and also over their expenditure. Not to consult anybody at the time of spending money but to ask for help from all when in debt, is not a good practice. Such a mentality cannot be encouraged.

To purchase, by incurring debt, serge where tweed will do, or gaberdine where serge will do, is surely against the principle of aparigraha. Similarly, people should take food which is nutritious but not rich. They have to give up the practice of feeding others with money taken on loan. That is why social control over the individual's conduct and expenditure is indispensably necessary. Hence, all Ananda Margis, when they see other Margis acting against the principles of Yama and Niyama, must make them shun this habit either by sweet or harsh words or by dealing even more strictly. Thus they will have to make the society strong. Henceforth I direct every Ananda Margi to keep strict vigilance on other Ananda Margi to make them practice the principles of Yama and Niyama and also to accept calmly directions of other Margis in this connection.

I am also giving one more advice in regard to aparigraha. If any Margis have to spend on anything in addition to the fixed expenditure (for example, expensive clothing, ornaments, articles of furniture, marriage, building, etc.), they should, before incurring such expenditure, obtain a clear order from their ácárya, unit secretary or district secretary, or any other person of responsible rank. Similarly, permission is to be obtained before taking loan from any businessman or money-lender. Where one's own ácárya or any person of responsible rank is not easily available, consultation or rather permission is to be obtained from any other ácárya, táttvika or any right-thinking member of the Marga. Every member should follow this instruction strictly.

NIYAMA SÁDHANÁ

The initial phase of the yaogika cult is the practice of Yama. This has already been explained. Today's discourse will be on the practice of Niyama. The practice of Brahmacharya is held in higher

esteem than the other four items of Yama. Similarly, in Niyama, the most important item is Iishvara prañidhāna. To be more clear and concrete we may say that out of the ten principles of Yama and Niyama the remaining eight are subordinated parts of the two items, Brahmacharya and Iishvara Prañidhāna. While dealing with their specialties, we may say that Yama Sādhana is the practice of the physical and psychic strata while the Niyama Sādhana carries equal weight in mundane, supramundane and spiritual strata.

SHAOCA

The first aspect of Niyama Sādhana is Shaoca. It means purity or cleanliness. It can be subdivided into two parts, one relating to external sphere, i.e., external cleanliness, and the other to mental sphere, i.e. internal cleanliness.

Shaocantu dvividhaṁ proktaṁ bāhyamābhyantarantatha
Mrjjalābhyam smṛtaṁ bāhyam manahshuddhistathāntaram.

The proper use of soap, water or other cleansers to keep the body, clothes or surroundings clean is external cleanliness. By this cleanliness the physical objects with which people are directly associated are cleaned and made fit for use.

When people, driven by instincts, direct their mental stuff blindly towards the objects of pleasure without taking any help from their conscience – or when mind ultimately gets crudified by being constantly goaded by selfish motives – whether or not they think of doing harm to others, their minds get distorted. The complexes by which this distortion occurs are the dirts of the mind. For example, if any acquaintance suddenly earns much name, fame or knowledge, many will develop a feeling of jealousy towards him. People suffer from mental trouble at the prosperity of others; they do not give the least thought as to how much potentiality they themselves possess to earn those things or to acquire those qualities. Though that fortunate person did no harm to them, yet being overpowered by jealousy they create trouble for, or think ill of, him or her.

Where selfish interest is hampered, the minds of even the so-called honest people also become distorted within a very short time. Just as one's clothes and houses get dirty very quickly in a dust storm, so also the mind becomes much more polluted by the storm of even insignificant passion in much less time. Therefore, it is a necessity to maintain the cleanliness of body, dress and house, but the need to keep the mind clean is still greater. Cleansing the mind is a far more laborious job than cleansing the body, clothes, house, etc.

Intelligent people should not, therefore, allow their mental purity to be stained. You must always guard against the tempest of passion. You must not yield to such storms. One more difference between external and internal cleanliness is that to remove external dirt – while cleansing the body, clothes or houses – one has to come in contact with impurities for some time. But in the mental sphere the cleansing process does not require your coming in contact with any filth. The application of force is necessary to remove the impurities. The weight of the actual gold can be determined only by removing the impurities from the gold.

The application of force must be a special type of action. External shaoca is an external activity and mental shaoca is an internal activity. If the impurity of selfishness, which, by entering into every cavity of the mental body, makes it weak – makes life a heavy burden – it has to be removed, it has to be burnt and melted in the fire of sádhaná. Such sádhaná is just the opposite of mean and selfish sádhaná; it is such that no impurity, no black spot, remains in the mind. The feeling of selflessness, the feeling of universalism is the only remedy to remove mental impurities. People who have fascination or temptation for any material object, can gradually remove that mental pollution arising out of selfish [motives] by adopting just the reverse course. Those who are very greedy for money should form the habit of charity, and they can serve humanity through such a practice. Those who are angry or egoistic should cultivate the habit of being polite, and they should serve humanity through that practice. Therefore, only selfless service to humanity and the efforts to look upon the world with a Cosmic outlook alone can lead to establishment in mental shaoca.

Human beings' desire to acquire things from others knows no bounds. Their hopes are never quenched, but their spirit of giving to others is very meagre. Generally, when people do give something to others, the intention of charity or service is absolutely secondary; their predominant feeling is to receive something in exchange. In other words, they have extreme greed to garner fame by one hand and give charity by the other. A sádhanaka will have to adopt the opposite course to get rid of the burning flames of greed, he/she will have to develop an infinite desire to give to others with no intention at all of obtaining anything from them. You will have to establish yourselves in the realm of infinity by smashing the fetters of unit ego.

You must have seen many people who become angry and sorrowful at the time of his distress saying, "I helped those persons in their adversity, served them so much on their sick-bed, but today they are so ungrateful that they do not even cast a glance at me." They may even curse, "God is witnessing everything – they will have to reap the consequences of their actions." You know that such remarks are an extremely vulgar expression of mental meanness. Such persons have not done sádhaná for mental purification, nor have they truly served anybody in adversity or sickness. In fact they took advantage of other people's distress and gave them some assistance as an advance; but the motive behind such assistance was to recover it with full interest.

A question may be raised as to how much people should donate for shaoca sádhaná. Should they make paupers of themselves? Where service is the goal, people should fully observe aparigraha, acquiring only the bare necessities of life, for themselves and their direct dependents, without which they cannot live, and utilize the rest for the collective welfare of the universe.

But one who is dedicated to an ideal must be prepared to gladly and eagerly give up one's all – even one's life – for the collective interest. Even in a house where food is not abundant, you should keep something for the residents of the house to appease their hunger, and donate the rest to the needy. In this case, thinking of the residents' necessities is not narrowness or meanness, because the preservation of life is certainly very important, though not the ultimate aim. When one is fighting for an ideal, however, to accept defeat means to plunge in severe gloom. Where there is not the least possibility to remove the gloom, one will have to sacrifice everything to uphold one's ideal. You should always be ready like an armed soldier to meet such exigencies.

SANTOŚA

Tośa means the state of mental ease. Santośa, therefore, means a state of proper ease. Contentment is not at all possible if the individual is running after carnal pleasures like a beast. As a result of extroversial analysis, the objects of enjoyments go on increasing both in number and abstraction and that is why one's mental flow never gets any rest. Under such circumstances how can one attain perfect peace of mind? Achieving the desired objects may give one pleasure for an hour or so, but that will not last long. The mind will again run in pursuit of new objects, leaving behind the objects already tasted – the long-cherished objects will lose their importance. This is the rule; this is the law of nature.

Human desire knows no end. Millionaires want to become multimillionaires, because they are not satisfied with their million. Ask the millionaires if they are happy with their money. They will say, "Where is the money? I am somehow pulling on." This answer indicates their ignorance of aparigraha. But such feelings have another adverse effect on body and mind. Out of excessive fondness for physical or mental pleasures people become mad to earn money and amass wealth. As money becomes the be-all and end-all of life, the mind gets crudified. Constant hankering after money results in negligence of one's health, and this makes the body unfit. Therefore, santośa sādhanā lies in being contented with the earnings of normal labor, without any undue pressure on the body and mind. To remain contented, one has to make a special type of mental effort to keep aloof from external allurements.

You are aware that there are two effective methods to detach the mind from tendencies; one is auto-suggestion and the other outer-suggestion. If anyone always tries to think thoughts just opposite to the mean tendencies which occupied the mind, a change in one's nature is bound to occur. This is auto-suggestion. A change in one's nature is also brought about if such ideals are repeatedly conveyed to one's ears by some external agents. This is called outer-suggestion. In the case of santośa sādhanā the aspirant must always follow auto-suggestion.

Santośa sādhanā does not imply that you should allow yourself to be exploited or oppressed by someone who takes advantage of your simplicity, and you should tolerate it silently. It is by no means proper for you to give up your right of self-preservation or your legitimate dues in life. You have to go on fighting with concerted efforts for the establishment of your rights. But you must never violate the principle of santośa by wasting your physical and mental energy under the sway of excessive greed.

TAPAH

Tapah means to practice penance to reach the goal. To practice shaoca it is not necessary to undergo physical discomfort to serve humanity. A donation of ten rupees brings no physical discomfort for millionaires. It is, therefore, not tapah for them but this gift helps them in practicing mental shaoca. There must be one and only one purpose behind the practice of penance and that is to shoulder sorrows and miseries of others to make them happy, to free them from grief and to give them comforts.

Just like shaoca sādhanā, in the practice of tapah there must not be even the least bit of commercial mentality. Shudrocita sevā (physical service) in almost all cases relates to tapah. Therefore, those who are afraid of physical labour or hate the shūdra (laborer) can never become a tāpasa. If you

serve sick people who are in great pain for hours together to give them needed relief, this is tapah; but if you serve them with the selfish motive of securing their assistance in your bad days, the entire effort of tapah is lost in a moment. Tapah sáadhaná is, therefore, to be above selfishness. As a rule, practice of tapah will lead to mental dilation, and this dilation will certainly help a sádha, to a large extent, in practicing Iishvara prañidhāna. The sádhakas of tapah know that the served is Brahma, their cherished goal. They are servants and the service rendered by them is their sáadhaná.

The very purpose of tapasyá of those who ready themselves to render service to the served only after consideration of their caste, creed, religion or nationality is defeated, because it is not possible for them to serve with due sincerity with such a lack of large-heartedness. Those who look upon the served only as an expression of the Cosmos and look after their comforts selflessly develop devotion or love for the Supreme in a short time. When love is aroused, and devotional sentiment is expressed, what else remains to be achieved?

What place does knowledge or reasoning occupy in tapah sáadhaná? This is a very important question. Truly speaking, far greater knowledge is required to render service pertaining to tapah than to render service pertaining to shaoca. Tapah devoid of knowledge is bound to be misused.

The opportunists will misuse your energy by extracting work from you to serve their selfish ends, and at the same time this will deprive the real sufferers of their due services from you. A rich miser approaches you with a tale of woe and entreats you to give him relief. Being moved with pity, if you do what is needed to relieve him of his suffering, the very purpose of tapah will be defeated, as it is without any knowledge or reasoning. The end result of your service will be that the rich man whom you have served will become more miserly and more selfish and will, in the future, try to deceive in a greater way people who dedicate themselves to the service of humanity. Secondly, as you will, to some extent, know his inner motive, you will become mentally depressed and you will also develop a hostile attitude towards him.

Therefore, while following the principle of tapah you should ascertain fully well whether the person you are going to serve, really needs your service. Only then should you engage yourself in service.

In practicing tapah you should always give consideration to those who are inferior to you and not to those who are superior. Your responsibility is greater for those who are weaker, poorer, less educated, more ignorant and downtrodden in comparison with you. Your responsibility is very little for those who are above your level, who are better off and more powerful than you. Therefore, you will have to ascertain with discrimination where your responsibility lies and to what extent; otherwise all your time, energy and labor employed in tapah will be in vain. To banquet the rich is of no use – give food to the starving. There is no need to send presents to your superiors – send medicine and food to the sick. Don't waste your time in flattering the rich; it will yield no result. Conquer the hearts of the underprivileged by your sympathetic behavior and accept them in your society.

You cannot attain Brahma by tapah, if it is devoid of discrimination; because in such cases you do not make the proper use of objects. Of course, it is better to do something than nothing and with

this end in view, tapah even without discrimination has some value. It has some psychological benefit. Buddha said,

Win the miser by charity,
Win the liar by speaking the truth.

You can definitely influence a miser by your charity, and there is nothing bad in this; but it is not what is understood by the term “tapah”.

There is another peculiarity in tapah. When the activities of human beings are not guided by discrimination, they are goaded by instinct. Tapah with discrimination changes the course of action and leads people towards emancipation. Of course, devotion also gives rise to discrimination but such devotion cannot be aroused in those who have not experienced Cosmic bliss.

SVÁDHYÁYA

Svádhyáya means the clear understanding of any spiritual subject. In ancient days students carried on their day-to-day Svádhyáya in the hermitage of the r̥sis. But the circumstances have changed and the term Svádhyáya has also lost its meaning with passage of time. Nowadays reading religious scriptures without grasping the meaning is also considered to be Svádhyáya. Religious professionals have misguided the public by their misinterpretation of the term svádhyáya. They say, “These are the results of reading such-and-such books; it matters little whether you understand the meaning or not. If you cannot find time to read books, simply touch your head with them thrice; or if you have no time to hear religious sermons, offer fruits or sweets to the deity. This will yield the same result. This is the real thing”.

Svádhyáya means not only to read or hear a subject, but also to understand its significance, the underlying idea. Acceptance of the outward or crude meaning has only led to the corruption of Vaeś́nava and Shákta sádhaná and this ultimately greatly distorted people’s religious belief. For example, one aspect of tantra sádhaná is called mām̐sa sádhaná. What is this mām̐sa sádhaná?

Má shabdát rasaná jineyá tadamshán rasaná priye
Yastad bhakṣayennityaṁ sa eva mām̐sa sádhakah.

“Ma” means “tongue” and “mām̐sa” means “action of the tongue”, i.e., vocal expression. The sádhaka who takes mām̐sa (vocal expression) every day, i.e., who practices control over speech, is a mām̐sa sádhaka. How beautiful the meaning is! But the so-called interpreters who are dominated by their material desires never hesitate to slaughter innocent goats at the altar of the deities in the name of mām̐sa (meat) sádhaná. The number of goats to be sacrificed is determined by the number of those who will eat the flesh. Alas! what an interpretation!

To understand the underlying meaning of what is laid down in scriptures, the idea is to be grasped first; otherwise the proper spirit will never be realized. If I say, “Shaoṁ́dikah surálayaṁ gacchati,” it will naturally mean “The liquor merchant is going to the liquor (surá) shop.” But if I say, “Naradah surálayaṁ gacchati,” it means “Nárada is going to the abode of surá (heaven).” But in the former case it was the house of surá, i.e., liquor shop. Thus, the same word carries different

meanings in different contexts. You have now understood how cautious you have to be in practicing svádhyāya. Those with vested interest seek to keep the public away from the true spirit of the true śāstras, because this facilitates their exploitation.

IISHVARA PRAÑIDHĀNA

There may be many interpretations of the term “Iishvara.” But it commonly means “the controller of this universe”. He who controls the thought-waves of this universe is Iishvara. Therefore, “Puruśottama” and “Iishvara” are not identical conceptions. In philosophy the word “Iishvara” has one more meaning – it is the witnessing counterpart of the objective Prakṛti where the static principle is dominant. It is the witnessing entity of the causal world, it is the magnified essence of prājiṇa, it is an entity free from all bondages.

Klesha-karma-vipākāśhae raparāmrśtah Puruśavishēśa Iishvarah.

Whatever may be the minor differences, to a sādḥaka, Iishvara is understood to be nothing other than Saguṇa Brahma or God.

Prañidhāna means to understand clearly or to adopt something as a shelter. Therefore, Iishvara prañidhāna means to establish oneself in the Cosmic idea – to accept Iishvara as the only ideal of life. The physical body constituted of five fundamental factors does not disobey the laws of the cycle of His thought-wave, extroversial or introversial. It is your mind that violates them, and this results in the degeneration of the unit consciousness; because unit consciousness is reflected in the mind and nowhere else. So Iishvara prañidhāna means to move with accelerated speed towards that Supreme Shelter, God. Therefore, Iishvara prañidhāna is absolutely based on bhāva, or ideation – it is a mental effort in its entirety. Shouting at the top of one’s voice for a big crowd to assemble, or showing devotion by beating drums, etc., has got no place in it. Your Iishvara is not deaf. Don’t shout to convey your mental feelings to Him.

One will have to detach the mind from worldly propensities while meditating upon Iishvara (God). First the mind will have to be withdrawn from the limited “I” feeling, and focused at a point. Then one will take the thought of the Macrocosm around that point with the help of the ideation of the mantra prescribed according to one’s own saṁskāra (mental potentiality). He is the subtlest Entity; therefore He can be realized only through feeling and by no other means.

Perhaps you know that japa is of three kinds – vācanika, upāṁshu, and mānasika. Vācanika japa, the attempt to attract His attention by reciting prayers in a loud voice, is absolutely meaningless. Respect, affection, sincerity and devotion are attributes of the inner heart and are not to be expressed loudly in the language of flatterers. Vācanika japa, therefore, serves no purpose. However when a desire for vocal expression of an internal feeling is aroused, the divine touch can be expressed in sweet language in the form of a verse or song. As for example the mantra “Om namaste sate sarvalokāshrayāya” occurs to my mind. Mantras of this type are very good, but they cannot serve the purpose of auto-suggestion of Iishvara prañidhāna.

Verses or mantras uttered in such a low tone that they are hardly audible are called upāṁshu japa. Although this is better than vācanika japa, it cannot be considered an ideal style of japa. Mental

japa is the best process of Iishvara prañidhāna. One's ideation should be expressed mentally and the mind should be its witnessing entity.

If this mental japa is practiced regularly and properly after learning the same from a competent teacher, the mind will progress in a particular flow, a forward movement on the path of Pratisaiṅcara of Brahma. The speed of the mind generated by a Sādhaka by means of Iishvara prañidhāna is faster than the mental speed of Brahma by which He is leading His psychic creations towards perfection through the path of Pratisaiṅcara.

When the mental flow of a spiritual aspirant moves along the introversial phase of Macrocosmic meditation, one's animative force, having the potentiality of divinity itself, rises above all tendencies – all saṁskāras – and proceeds towards Eternal bliss. In this state the mind is vibrated with Cosmic feeling. The unexpressed divine qualities of the higher glands find expression and the resonance of the mind vibrates the nervous system. This gives rise to pious expressions in the physical body. In the case of those people whose occult feelings are not physically expressed due to causes associated with the nerves, the mental vibrations cause certain radical changes, in the various glands within the body. These occult feelings are basically of eight types: stambha (astounding), kampa (trembling), sveda (sweating), svarabheda (hoarseness of voice), ashru (tears), romāiṇca (horripilation), vaevarṇa (change of colour) and pralaya (fainting fit). There are other feelings associated with these major feelings. For examples, nrtya (dancing), giita (singing), viluṇṭhana (rolling), kroshana (weeping), huṁkāra (roaring), lālāsrāva (salivating), jrmḃhaṇa (yawning), lokāpekṣā tyāga (indifference), āṭṭahāsyā (bursting into laughter), ghūrṇana (whirling), hikkā (hiccoughing), tanumotāna (relaxation of the physical body) and diirghashvāsa (deep breathing).

The probability of such signs is very little in the case of vācanika and upāṁshu japa. That expression is very natural in case of those who have learned the correct process of sādhanā. These are associated with pleasure, and not with pain of any kind. Therefore, those who do not practice sādhanā should not be unnecessarily afraid of these signs.

When such occult symptoms appear, the sādḥaka also should not worry in any way. In this state if the sādḥakas pay attention to expressing those signs, their progress will be retarded. If they suppress these occult feelings, their bhāva or ideation itself will be disturbed and their minds will become detached from Iishvara prañidhāna. You should always remember that Cosmic feeling is above everything else; it is unwise to waste time paying attention to the external symptoms of the ideation or bhāva.

These occult symptoms disappear as soon as the mind is detached from Cosmic objectivity. When sādḥakas attain the capability to establish themselves in Cosmic feeling for long periods, those ideations are confined to the mental body only and the physical body becomes calm to a great extent.

It is desirable to practice various lessons of sādhanā alone, in a lonely place, but Iishvara prañidhāna can be practiced both individually as well as collectively. In collective Iishvara prañidhāna the combined mental efforts work together, and so give rise to the expression of the higher signs in a very short time. Therefore, like all other aspects of sādhanā, Iishvara prañidhāna

should positively be practiced alone, in a lonely place; but in addition, do not miss the opportunity of collective Iishvara prañidhāna whenever some of you conveniently meet together. The indomitable mental force aroused as a result of collective Iishvara prañidhāna will help you solve any problem, great or small, on this earth. It is for this reason that you should always be zealous to attend weekly dharmacakra regularly.

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